An Apple a Day Keeps the Doctor Away

*As the old adage says, “***An apple a day keeps the doctor away.”**

The apple belongs to the *Rosaceae* family like it’s cousins the plum, nectarine, and peach. The apple is a sweet, crunchy fruit with an edible skin and a cream or white flesh that has been touted the world over for its health promoting and disease prevention benefits. The reality is that the medicinal properties of apples are well documented. Here are just a few to get you started.

Apples Are Low in Calories

A medium sized apple contains about 80-100 calories.

Apples Contain Vitamin C and Beta Carotene

The apple contains both Vitamin C and Beta Carotene antioxidants that help the body develop resistance against infections as well as aiding in the removal of harmful free radicals that cause inflammation inside the body.

Good Source of B Vitamins

Apples are a great source of B complex vitamins such as riboflavin, thiamin, and pyridoxine (vitamin B-6). These vitamins are considered “helper molecules” that assist in biochemical transformations inside the body.

Consuming Apples Can Boost Your Immune System

Apples contain several antioxidants that help the body protect

itself from the effects of free radicals. Antioxidants are disease fighting compounds, which scientists believe help prevent and repair oxidation damage that happens in our bodies due to normal cell activity. Apples are rich in antioxidant phytonutrients, *flavonoids,* and *polyphenolics.* Some of the important flavonoids in apples are quercetin, epicatechin, and procyanidin B2 which **help boost and fortify your immune system.**

Apples Are High in Soluble Fiber

The apple is rich in dietary fiber, which helps prevent absorption of bad cholesterol in the gut.

Contain Fiber To Help Regulate Cholesterol

The soluble fiber found in apples binds with fats in the intestines and brings your overall cholesterol to **lower levels**.

Help Detoxify Your Liver & Colon

Your liver is responsible for clearing the toxins out of your body. Toxins get into our bodies because we are consistently consuming them in the form of food or drinks. If the liver fails to function properly, all sorts of health problems will begin to occur. Eating a diet rich in vegetables and fruits, like apples, is the easiest thing you can do to help detoxify your liver. The fiber is also beneficial because it saves the colon mucous membrane from exposure to these toxic substances by binding to cancer-causing chemicals inside the colon.

Can Decrease Risk of Diabetes

Apples are loaded with soluble fiber which dulls the blood sugar swings. Also, research shows that certain flavonoids present in apples could be the reason they have a beneficial

effect. One study noted in the Feb 2012 issue of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition noted that people who ate 5 or more apples a week had a lower risk of developing diabetes than those who did not.

Fiber and Pectin Can Help Prevent Colon Cancer

The high amounts of fiber and pectin in the apple helps eliminate toxins and protects the lining of the colon so that cancer cells are unable to form.

Phenolic Compounds Aid the Heart

When plaque builds inside your arteries, it reduces blood flow to your heart which can lead to coronary artery disease. High soluble fiber intake slows the buildup of cholesterol-rich plaque in your arteries. The cholesterol that gets into your system is prevented from solidifying on your artery walls by the phenolic compound found in apple skins.

Helps Prevent Destruction of Brain Cells Causing Alzheimers

Eating a few apples a day will prevent the destruction of brain cells which leads to Alzheimers. Noticeable improvements in the memory of Alzheimers patients were made after consuming apples and/or apple juice for a few weeks. Consuming apples may reduce your chances of developing Alzheimers by 75% as noted in a study done by Dr Shea, a neurobiologist at the University of Massachusetts.

Work To Prevent Gallstones

The gallbladder is a storage place for bile which is a liquid produced in the liver. The normal function of bile is to help your body digest fats. Gallstones form when liquid bile

hardens and becomes pieces of stone like material that can block the common bile duct causing symptoms such as nausea and vomiting or a painful gallbladder attack. Gallstones have also been known to form when there is too much cholesterol in your bile. **To prevent gallstones, doctors recommend a diet high in fiber** to help you control your weight and cholesterol levels.

Work To Remove Stains from Teeth

Miraculously, the enzymes present in apples react to the stains on the surface of the teeth. Eating the skin as well as the flesh causes a rubbing effect which removes the stains from the teeth. This natural teeth whitening solution will not strip the enamel of the teeth while keeping them healthy and white!

How To Add Apples to Your Diet

There are many ways to add apples to your diet. Some common methods include eating them whole at breakfast or as a snack in between meals. Apples also make a great addition to any smoothie providing much of the bulk/fiber needed to hold it together. You can also chop apples to top a fresh salad or cook them in pies, muffins, breads, and cakes. Personally, I find apples and peanut butter to be a perfect, healthy treat that satisfies my sweet tooth.

Sources & Further Reading:

- *15 health benefits of eating apples*
- *How Do Gallstones Form?*
- *Apple Fruit nutrition facts*
- *Blueberries and apples tied to lower diabetes risk*